DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/IP
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L/C - Mr. Kelley

Liberty

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MAY 5, 1970

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Honorable J. Glenn Beall, Jr.
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Congressman Beall:

In your letter to me of April 23 you inquired on behalf of one of your constituents about an attack by Israel's forces against a United States ship in which a number of Americans were killed and wounded. I assume you refer to the June 8, 1967 attack on the USS Liberty.

Promptly following the attack the Government of Israel informed the United States Government that it assumed responsibility for the attack and was prepared to make amends for the tragic loss of life and material damage.

On December 29, 1967 our Embassy in Tel Aviv presented to the Government of Israel claims totalling $3,323,500 on behalf of the families of the 34 men killed in the attack. After negotiations, Israel paid in full the amount claimed on May 27, 1968. On March 28, 1969 our Embassy in Tel Aviv presented claims totalling $3,452,275 on behalf of the injured men, and Israel paid in full the amount claimed on April 28, 1969. In both cases, United States Treasury checks drawn on the funds received from the Government of Israel were sent to the claimants within a month after the Israeli payment was received.

Negotiations on the claim for damage to the ship are still in process. The ship has in the meantime been decommissioned and is in the process of being scrapped, along with other vessels in its class.

I hope the above information will be helpful in replying to your constituent. Please continue to call on me whenever you think I can be of assistance.

Sincerely yours,

David H. Abshire
Assistant Secretary for
Congressional Relations

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